

What's behind the widening gender wage gap in the U.S.?



A nurse works at the El Nuevo San Juan Health Center at the Bronx borough in New York on Jan. 11, 2024

Associated Press

By **ALEXANDRA OLSON and CLAIRE SAVAGE**

AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — Just how much of a setback was the COVID-19 pandemic for U.S. working women?

Although women who lost or left their jobs at the height of the crisis have largely returned to the workforce, a recent finding points to the

price many paid for stepping back: In 2023, the gender wage gap between men and women working full-time widened year-over-year for the first time in 20 years, according to an annual report from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Women working full time earned 83 cents on the dollar compared to men in 2023, down from a historic high of 84 cents in 2022. The

Census Bureau called it the first statistically significant widening of the ratio since 2003.

Economists trying to make sense of the data say it captures a complicated moment during the disjointed post-pandemic labor market recovery when many women finally returned to work full-time, especially in hard-hit low-wage industries where they are overrepre-

sented like hospitality, social work and caretaking.

The news is not all bad: Wages rose for all workers last year, but faster for men. And while the gender wage gap rose, it's on par with what it was in 2019 before the pandemic hit.

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What's behind the widening gender wage gap in the U.S.?

Continued from Front

S.J. Glynn, the Labor Department's chief economist, said it's too soon to tell whether 2023 was a blip or the start of a worrisome new trend for the gender wage gap. But she said that even a reversion to the pre-pandemic status quo is a reminder of how far behind women were in the first place, and shows how the pandemic slowed the march toward gender equity.

While the wage gap reached a historic low in 2022, that may have been a "false narrowing" because so many low-wage women had been pushed out of full-time jobs by the pandemic that it drove up the average female median earnings, said Noreen Farrell, executive director of Equal Rights Advocates and chair of Equal Pay Today, a coalition of groups advocating for workplace gender equity.

A surge of Latinas into the workforce had an impact. Hispanic women in particular illustrate the complexities of this moment. They were the only demographic group of women overall whose wage gap narrowed marginally between 2022 and 2023 in comparison to white men working full time, according to Census Bureau data analyzed by both the National Women's Law Center and the National Partnership for Women and Families, research and advocacy groups. For Black women and Asian women, the wage gap widened, and for white women, it stayed the same.

Despite their wages rising slightly faster than for other women, however, Latinas remain among the lowest paid workers -- with median full-time earnings of \$43,880, compared with \$50,470 for Black women, \$60,450 for white women and \$75,950 for white men. Consequently, their rapid entry into the full-time workforce in 2023 helped slow down median wage gains for women overall, likely contributing to the widen-



Construction laborer Myrtle Wilson prepares for the installation of windows on a building on Jan. 9, 2019 in New York.

ing of the gender wage that year, according to Liana Fox, assistant division chief in the Social, Economic and Housing Statistics Division at the Census Bureau.

Latinas have increasingly become a driving force of the U.S. economy as they enter the workforce at a faster pace than non-Hispanic people. Between 2022 and 2023, the number of Latinas working full time surged by 5% while the overall number of full-time female workers stayed the same.

Ariane Hegewisch, program director of employment and earnings at the Institute for Women's Policy Research, said the slight narrowing of the wage gap for Latinas may be because their presence in top earning occupations grew from 13.5% to 14.2% last year, according to an IWPR analysis of federal labor data.

However, the portion of Latinas in full-time low-wage jobs also grew in 2023, she added.

The recovery is leaving behind part-time Latina workers

Latina workers were among

the hardest hit by the pandemic, suffering the highest unemployment rate at 20.1% in April 2020 of any major demographic group, according to a Labor Department report that examined the pandemic's disproportionate toll on women.

Domestic workers, who are disproportionately immigrant women, especially felt the effects. Many lost their jobs, including Ingrid Vaca, a Hispanic home care worker for older adults in Falls Church, Virginia.

Vaca, who is from La Paz, Bolivia, contracted COVID-19 several times and was hospitalized for a week in 2020 because she was having trouble breathing. She continued to test positive even when she recovered, so was unable to enter families' homes or work for most of that year or the next.

She had no money for food or rent. "It was very hard," she said, describing how she lost clients during her time away and is still struggling to find full-time, stable work.

The Census Bureau calculates the gender wage gap by comparing only men and women who work

year-round in full-time jobs. But a grimmer picture for women emerges from data that includes part-time workers, said Jocelyn Frye, president of the National Partnership for Women & Families.

Latinas, for instance, are only paid 51 cents for every dollar paid to white men by this measure, and their gender wage gap widened from 52 cents on the dollar in 2022 according to the organization's report, which analyzed Census Bureau microdata.

Matthew Fienup, executive director of California Lutheran University's Center for Economic Research & Forecasting, said he expects the gains in Latina wages, educational attainment and contributions to the U.S. GDP "to continue for the foreseeable future." For women overall, he noted that the gender wage gap has steadily narrowed since 1981 despite occasionally widening from one-year-to the next.

"It's important not to put too much emphasis on a single year's data point," he added.

Political divisions have hampered policy solutions

Still, the pace of progress has been slow and seen periods of stagnation.

The U.S. will continue to have a gender pay gap until the country addresses the structural problems that are causing it, according to Seher Khawaja, director of Economic Justice at national women's civil rights organization Legal Momentum.

"There are a few underlying problems that we're really not correcting," Khawaja said.

For example, the current economy relies heavily on women doing unpaid or underpaid care work for children and older adults. "Until we come to terms with the fact that we need to give care work the value that it deserves, women are going to continue to be left behind," Khawaja said.

While many Democrats and Republicans agree on the structural challenges facing women in the workforce, they have struggled to find common ground on policy solutions, including expanding paid family leave and offering protection for pregnant workers.

An ongoing battle centers around the Democratic-sponsored Paycheck Fairness Act, which would update the Equal Pay Act of 1963, including by protecting workers from retaliation for discussing their pay, a practice advocates say helps keep workers in the dark about wage discrimination.

Republicans have generally opposed the bill as redundant and conducive to frivolous lawsuits. Vice President Kamala Harris, however, reiterated her support for Democratic-sponsored bill on Monday following the death of one of its most prominent supporters, the equal pay icon Lilly Ledbetter.

Pay inequity, meanwhile has ripple effects, Khawaja explained: "It's not only women who suffer. It is their families, their children who are suffering from the lack of adequate income and compensation. And this is driving intergenerational cycles of poverty and insecurity." □

Federal money to help states hit by hurricanes Helene and Milton nears \$2 billion

By REBECCA SANTANA

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The federal government has approved nearly \$2 billion in assistance across six states to help people hit hard by hurricanes Helene and Milton, the White House said Wednesday.

The federal government has been under intense pressure to show that it is getting help to areas devastated by the back-to-back hurricanes in late September and early October as it warns that more money will be needed to fund the response.

Helene was a Category 4 storm that first struck Florida's Gulf Coast on Sept. 26, dumped trillions of gallons of rain and left a trail of destruction for hundreds of miles across several states. Hurricane Milton swept across Florida two weeks later.

Hurricane response has become a key part of the upcoming presidential election with former President Donald Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris both positioning themselves as the best candidate to respond to such calamities.

The money approved so far includes funds that go to residents for things like rental reimbursements when



Damage from Hurricane Milton is seen at a mobile home community on Manasota Key, in Englewood, Fla., Sunday, Oct. 13, 2024.

Associated Press

they cannot live in their house or quick infusions of \$750 in cash to pay for things like diapers or food. It also includes money for public assistance such as reimbursing local governments for removing debris or repairing public infrastructure like roads, bridges or schools.

About \$911 million has gone toward damage caused by Hurricane Helene, while about \$620 million has gone toward recovery from Hurricane Milton, according to the White House release.

Other funds have gone toward things like agriculture assistance. The six states where the money has gone are Florida, South Carolina, Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.

FEMA and the federal government have been battling misinformation about their efforts with many of the false claims being fueled by Trump and others just ahead of the election. Much of the misinformation has centered on the agency's response in North Carolina, whose mountain-

ous regions were especially hard hit by Helene.

The rumors have raised concerns about the safety of FEMA staffers on the ground and whether residents would be discouraged from applying for assistance. The agency said Wednesday that it monitors how many people register for assistance in areas where a disaster has been declared. So far, about 15.2% of households in affected North Carolina counties have applied for assistance, which is lower

than in Georgia and South Carolina but still in the range of what's expected. The agency also noted that it is still early in the 60-day period that people have to register for help.

"FEMA is continually assessing registration patterns across all affected states to identify any outlier communities that may be registering at lower rates than anticipated," the agency said.

On Tuesday, the Small Business Administration said it has run out of money for the disaster assistance loans it offers small businesses, homeowners and renters. So far the SBA has offered \$48 million in loans to survivors of the two hurricanes, the news release said.

FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell has repeatedly said that her agency has enough money in its disaster relief fund to respond to Helene and Milton. But Criswell has said the agency eventually will need supplemental funding from Congress. If that doesn't happen, FEMA would go into what's called "immediate needs funding," which means it would stop paying out for previous disasters and conserve its money for life-saving missions during any new ones. □

Listeria recall grows to 12 million pounds of meat and poultry, some of it sent to U.S. schools

By JONEL ALECCIA

AP Health Writer

A nationwide recall of meat and poultry products potentially contaminated with listeria has expanded to nearly 12 million pounds and now includes ready-to-eat meals sent to U.S. schools, restaurants and major retailers, federal officials said.

The updated recall includes prepared salads, burritos and other foods sold at stores including Costco, Trader Joe's, Target, Walmart and Kroger.

The meat used in those products was processed at a Durant, Oklahoma, manufacturing plant operated by BrucePac. The Woodburn, Oregon-based company sells precooked meat and poultry to industrial, foodservice and retail companies across the country.

Routine testing found potentially dangerous listeria bacteria in samples of BrucePac chicken, officials with the U.S. Agriculture Department said.

No illnesses have been confirmed in connection with the recall, USDA officials said. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has not launched an outbreak investigation, a spokesperson said.

The recall, issued on Oct. 9, includes foods produced between May 31 and Oct. 8. The USDA has posted a 342-page list of hundreds of potentially affected foods, including chicken wraps sold at Trader Joe's, chicken burritos sold at Costco and many types of salads sold at stores such as Target and Walmart. The foods were also sent to school districts and restaurants across the country. □



An aerial view of the Boar's Head processing plant that was tied to a deadly food poisoning outbreak, Aug. 29, 2024, in Jarratt, Va.

Associated Press

3 states renew their effort to reduce access to the abortion drug mifepristone

By **GEOFF MULVIHILL**
Associated Press

Three states are renewing a legal push to restrict access to the abortion medication mifepristone, including reinstating requirements it be dispensed in person instead of by mail.

The request from Kansas, Idaho and Missouri filed Friday would bar the drug's use after seven weeks of pregnancy instead of 10 and require three in-person doctor office visits instead of none in the latest attempt to make it harder to get a drug that's used in most abortions nationally.

The filing seeking to sue the U.S. Food and Drug Administration was made in a federal court in Texas where the case was returned after the U.S. Supreme Court in June unanimously agreed to keep federal changes that eased access to the medication.

In that ruling, the high court did not tackle the merits of the approval but rather said that anti-abortion doctors and their organizations lacked the legal right to sue. The justices also previously refused the states'



A patient prepares to take the first of two combination pills, mifepristone, for a medication abortion during a visit to a clinic in Kansas City, Kan., on, Oct. 12, 2022.

Associated Press

push to intervene in the case.

The states argue they have legal standing because access to the pills "undermine state abortion laws and frustrate state law enforcement," they wrote in court documents. They are now making a more modest but still far-reaching request in-

stead: that the courts return the restrictions around the drug to where they were before the FDA relaxed them in 2016 and 2021.

The relaxed rules also allow care providers such as nurse practitioners to prescribe the drugs in addition to doctors.

Medication abortions usu-

ally using mifepristone in combination with a second drug, misoprostol, accounted for about half the abortions provided in the U.S. before the Supreme Court's 2022 ruling that overturned Roe v. Wade. The decision ended the nationwide right to abortion and opened the door for states to im-

pose bans and additional restrictions. Thirteen states now enforce bans on abortion at all stages of pregnancy and four more bar it after about six weeks before many women know they're pregnant.

The pills are now used in close to two-thirds of the abortions provided across the country and prescribed via telehealth to patients in states with bans by doctors in states with laws that seek to protect them from legal scrutiny for providing such interstate care. Expanded access to the medications is one reason monthly abortion numbers are up slightly since Roe was overturned.

Aid Access, which helps women get abortion pills and covers costs for those who can't afford them, criticized the latest filing on Wednesday.

"The document submitted is full of lies," said Dr. Rebecca Gomperts, the group's founder. "There is overwhelming scientific proof that telemedical abortions done at home for pregnancies up to 13 weeks are as safe as in-clinic abortions." □

California health care workers get a pay bump under a new minimum wage law

By **SOPHIE AUSTIN**
Associated Press/Report for America
SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)

— Some of the lowest-paid health care workers in California will get a pay bump Wednesday under a state

law gradually increasing their wages to at least \$25 an hour.

Workers at rural, independent health care facilities will start making a minimum of \$18 an hour, while others at hospitals with at least 10,000 full-time employees will begin getting paid at least \$23 an hour this week. The law will increase workers' pay over the next decade, with the \$25 hourly rate kicking in sooner for some than others.

About 350,000 workers will have to be paid more under the law starting Wednesday, according to the University of California, Berkeley Labor Center.

"Today's victory belongs to the workers who spoke passionately about the grueling work and the impact

on patients when workers cover two or three jobs, whether on short-staffed nursing home floors, in hospital operating rooms, or at the front desks and phone lines of community clinics," state Sen. Maria Elena Durazo, a Democrat who authored the law, said in a statement.

Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom signed the law last year, and workers were slated to get raises in June. Lawmakers and the governor agreed this year to delay the law to help close an estimated \$46.8 billion budget shortfall.

The law applies to a wide range of workers, including those providing services at psychiatric health facilities, urgent care clinics and residential settings, according

to the state Department of Industrial Relations. It does not apply to employees at state-run health care facilities.

California's minimum wage for most workers in the state is \$16 an hour. Voters will decide in November whether to increase that gradually to \$18 an hour, which would be the highest statewide minimum wage in the U.S., by 2026. Fast food workers in California must now have to be paid at least \$20 hourly under a law Newsom signed last year.

Some health care providers raised concerns when the law was passed last year that it would put a financial burden on hospitals as they tried to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. □



Retirees Ron Martin, left, and Willie Mae Hampton, right, join other supporters of the Service Employees International Union at a rally against proposed budget cuts to state provided social safety net programs, in Sacramento, Calif., Tuesday, June 11, 2024.

Associated Press

U.S. warns of growing North Korean military support for Russia's war

By KIM TONG-HYUNG

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)

— The U.S. and its allies are "alarmed" by North Korea's nuclear and missile threats as well as its increasing military support for Russia's war in Ukraine, a senior U.S. official said Wednesday, but couldn't confirm Ukrainian claims that North Korean soldiers were sent to fight for Moscow.

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell spoke with reporters following discussions with South Korean and Japanese counterparts on reinvigorating an international pressure campaign against North Korea, which faltered in recent years amid a deepening divide at the U.N. Security Council.

Earlier on Wednesday, Washington, Seoul and Tokyo announced plans with eight Western governments to launch a new multinational team to monitor the enforcement of sanctions against North Korea.

Russia in March vetoed a U.N. resolution in a move that effectively abolished monitoring by U.N. experts of Security Council sanctions against North Korea.



South Korea's First Vice Foreign Minister Kim Hong-kyun, right, shakes hands with United States Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell during their meeting at the Foreign Ministry in Seoul Wednesday, Oct. 16, 2024.

It prompted Western accusations that Moscow was acting to shield its arms purchases from Pyongyang to fuel its war in Ukraine.

Campbell said there are signs that North Korea was increasing its support of materials, including artillery and missiles, for Russia's war on Ukraine, which he said was "creating further instability in Europe." He said the

U.S. was still evaluating reports that North Korea was also sending personnel.

"We are concerned by them and ... we agreed that we will continue to monitor the situation closely," Campbell said about the claims.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said that North Korea is sending military personnel to help Rus-

sia's war effort, without providing details. Ukrainian media reported earlier this month that six North Koreans were among those killed after a Ukrainian missile strike in the partially occupied eastern Donetsk region on Oct. 3.

North Korea has also been making increasingly provocative threats against rival South Korea, including

accusing the South of infiltrating drones to drop anti-North Korean propaganda leaflets over Pyongyang and threatening to attack if it happens again.

North Korea on Tuesday blew up the northern sections of unused road and rail routes that once linked it with South Korea, in a choreographed demolition demonstrating its growing anger with South Korea's conservative government.

Tensions on the Korean Peninsula have spiked since 2022, as North Korean leader Kim Jong Un used Russia's war on Ukraine as a window to dial up his weapons testing activities and threats. Washington, Seoul and Tokyo have strengthened their combined military exercises in response and took steps to sharpen their nuclear deterrence strategies built around strategic U.S. assets.

Following his talks with Campbell and Japanese Vice Foreign Minister Masataka Okano, South Korean Vice Foreign Minister Kim Hong Kyun said that the countries condemn the North's "intentional moves to create tensions." □

Associated Press

Brazil federal police seek extradition of Bolsonaro supporters from Argentina

By ELÉONORE HUGHES and DAVID BILLER

Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)

— Brazil's Federal Police requested the extradition of dozens of people who had fled the country after being accused of storming top government offices last year, in an alleged bid to forcefully restore former President Jair Bolsonaro to office, two sources familiar with the police request told the Associated Press on Wednesday.

The police sent their request to the Supreme Court's Justice Alexandre de Moraes, who remitted it to the Justice Ministry, according to the sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't autho-

rized to speak publicly. One of them said the request targets 63 people, most believed to be in neighboring Argentina.

De Moraes oversees the extensive investigation into the Jan. 8 rampage in the capital, Brasília, and has prohibited suspects and those convicted from leaving the country.

Bolsonaro who is a target of the investigation himself and his allies deny wrongdoing and say they are victims of political persecution, echoing former U.S. President Donald J. Trump's characterization of his legal woes. He repeatedly sowed doubt about the reliability of Brazil's voting system, never conceded defeat in the October 2022

presidential election and declined to attend President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's swearing-in.

The Federal Police carried out an operation in June to capture fugitives involved in the riots. More than 200 defendants deliberately failed to comply with judicial precautionary measures or even fled to other countries, police said in a statement.

So far, dozens of fugitives have been arrested in the states of Espírito Santo, Sao Paulo, Mato Grosso do Sul, Mato Grosso, Goias, Minas Gerais, Bahia, Parana and the Federal District. They are accused of a litany of crimes, including attempting a coup, incitement to crime, destruction and

deterioration of protected property, police said.

The Supreme Court asked Argentina's foreign affairs ministry for confirmation that 143 "fugitives from Bra-

zilian justice are located in Argentine territory," Brazilian authorities said on June 11. The letter was delivered via the embassy in Buenos Aires. □



Supporters of Brazil's former President Jair Bolsonaro storm the National Congress building, in Brasilia, Brazil, Jan. 8, 2023.

Associated Press

New UK bill aims to legalize assisted dying for people who are terminally ill

By MARIA CHENG
AP Medical Writer

LONDON (AP) — A new bill aiming to legalize assisted dying in Britain was introduced in Parliament on Wednesday, marking the first time in nearly a decade that the House of Commons will debate allowing doctors to help end people's lives after previous court challenges to change a legal blanket ban failed.

Labour politician Kim Leadbeater read out the name of the bill in the House of Commons, formally starting it on its journey through Parliament. The bill grants terminally ill people in England and Wales a way to allow physicians to help them die, although the details won't be released until later in the month, ahead of its first substantial debate and a Parliamentary vote. Prime Minister Keir Starmer has promised that lawmakers will have a "free vote," meaning they will not be obliged to vote along party lines. Starmer supported a 2015 assisted dying bill and has said "there are grounds for changing the law."

"There is absolutely no question of disabled peo-



A small demonstration by people advocating assisted dying hold a protest outside the Houses of Parliament as a bill to legalise assisted dying is to be put before lawmakers in London, England, Wednesday, Oct. 16, 2024.

Associated Press

ple or those with mental illness who are not terminally ill being pressured to end their lives," Leadbeater said in a statement. She said it is "important that we get the legislation right, with the necessary protections and safeguards in place."

Small groups of protesters both for and against the bill gathered outside Parliament on Wednesday

morning. Leadbeater's bill is likely to be similar to one introduced in the House of Lords earlier this year that has made only slow progress. The unelected House of Lords studies and amends legislation passed by the elected House of Commons. While bills can originate in the Lords, they rarely become law.

The bill introduced in the

House of Lords restricts assisted dying to adults with six or fewer months to live and requires permission from the High Court after having a declaration signed by two doctors, among other criteria. Esther Rantzen, the founder of a British children's charity who has advanced lung cancer, encouraged people to write to their local member

of Parliament, saying "all we are asking for is the right to choose." Rantzen said in the absence of a legal way to end her life in Britain, she plans to travel to Switzerland, where assisted suicide is legal for foreigners. Opponents of assisted dying, however, say there is no way to change the law without endangering vulnerable people, according to actress Liz Carr, a disability rights campaigner. Assisted suicide where patients take a lethal drink prescribed by a doctor is legal in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and parts of the U.S., with regulations on qualifying criteria varying by jurisdiction.

Naomi Richards, an anthropologist at the University of Glasgow who specializes in death and dying, said the number of people who might make use of assisted dying, if legalized in Britain, would be fairly limited, unless the public pushed for wider access. "These are questions that in a democracy will only be answered further down the road," she said. □

Zimbabwe to compensate white farmers who lost land in seizures 20 years ago

By FARAI MUTSAKA
Associated Press

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP) — Zimbabwe says it will compensate local and foreign white farmers who lost land and property more than 20 years ago in farm seizures meant to redress some of the wrongs of colonialism. About 4,000 white farmers lost their homes and swathes of land when the Black-majority country's then-president, Robert Mugabe, launched the often-chaotic redistribution program in 2000, which turned violent at times. Mugabe, who died in 2019, said it was aimed at addressing colonial-era land inequities after the south-

ern African nation gained independence from white minority rule in 1980.

Finance Minister Mthuli Ncube announced Wednesday at a meeting with diplomats that his

government approved 441 applications for compensation worth \$351.6 million from local white farmers and 94 applications from foreigners worth \$196.6 million, but only 1%, or \$3.5 mil-

lion, will be paid in cash to local farmers who lost land. The balance, Ncube said, will be paid through the issuance of treasury bonds. Foreigners will receive an initial \$20 million to be shared equally among the 94 claimants from Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland and several countries in eastern Europe, he said.

White farmers who owned the majority of prime farmland were removed from their farms, often forcibly by violent mobs led by veterans of the country's 1970s independence war. Some farmers and their workers died or were seriously injured in the violence that in-

cluded beatings and rape, according to Human Rights Watch. The seizures badly impacted commercial farming, forcing a country that was a key regional food producer and exporter to rely on assistance from donors.

Zimbabwe's agriculture sector has rebounded in recent years, but recent droughts are now the main challenge. The compensation for the local farmers is not for the land which Mugabe's government said had been seized from Zimbabwe's Black majority under colonialism but for infrastructure such as buildings, wells and irrigation equipment. □



Zimbabwe farm squatters burn a field of standing crops at Chirobi Farm, about 43 miles (70 kms) north of Harare, Saturday Nov. 11, 2000.

Associated Press

The Lionfish And its threat to our marine wild life

(Oranjestad)—Despite its colorful and striking appearance, the lionfish has become a Caribbean-wide problem for Atlantic sea life. The Aruban marine wild life is also affected by this beautiful dilemma, as it is foreign to our waters and has become a danger to our local fish and reefs.

Originating from the Indo-Pacific Ocean, the lionfish is a relatively small fish. It

has no teeth, but it does protect itself against predators using its sharp, colorful spikes. It is said that the sting of a lionfish can be up to 100 times more painful than that of a bee's sting.

Its natural predators in the Indo-Pacific are sharks and barracudas, but in the Caribbean Sea, local fish do not recognize the lionfish as part of their diet. In other words, the lionfish has no

predators in the Caribbean Sea. And this becomes a major problem for our local marine life; if there are no predators to stimulate population control of lionfish, these fish can continue to reproduce and expand to other parts of the Atlantic, become more invasive and dangerous for other types of fish.

For Aruba, the lionfish is a problem especially for our local coral reefs. According to Patrick van Brakel, lionfish expert and hunter from the Hunting Lionfish Aruba foundation, every reef has a "cleaning station"—tiny fish that eat algae and other types of waste on a reef, thus maintaining the reef's health and providing food to the fish population in the area. However, as the lionfish feeds off of these tiny fish, it becomes harder for the coral reef to maintain its health.

Patrick also shares the origins of lionfish in the Caribbean Sea. It is theorized that the introduction of



these fish in the Atlantic happened in Florida, where people would buy lionfish from across the world to keep in their aquariums. However, lionfish grow, and as these buyers realized that the fish were too much upkeep, they were let out into the ocean to roam free. From continental USA, the lionfish travelled to and invaded the entire Caribbean area, from Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao up to New York. In Aruba, lionfish were discovered in 2009.

Controlling the lionfish population is challenge, as each female fish can lay up to 40,000 eggs a day. Luckily, we have people like van

Brakel who dedicate their lives hunting and capturing these invasive species, using them for consumption and jewelry making.

They are caught with a hand spear, an object resembling a garbage picker with 4 sharp prongs. These spears are used like a sling shot to catch lionfish from a distance. These fish are then put into a collecting tube and taken out of the water. Van Brakel not only catches them himself, but also cooks them for locals and tourists at The LionFish Snack Aruba in Paradera. This way, he does his part in protecting the local wild life. □

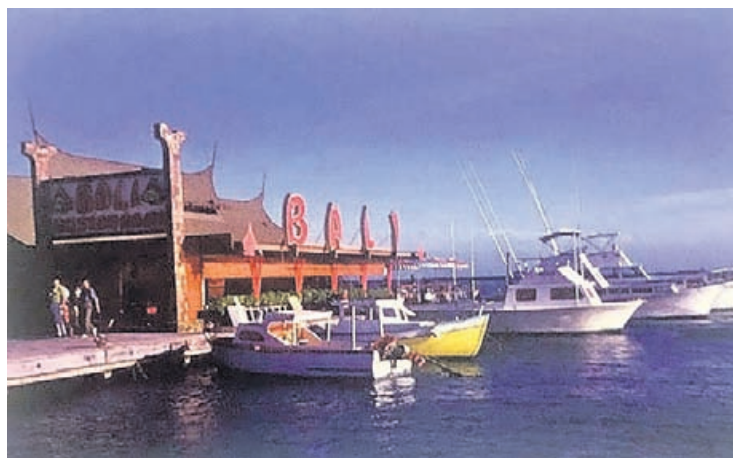


The Bali Restaurant: a touristic hot spot and lost gem on the island

(Oranjestad)—Once located in what is now the Renaissance Marina, the Bali Restaurant was once both a touristic and local hot spot, and nowadays it's considered a forgotten gem on the island.

Known as "the floating restaurant", Bali first opened in 1955 by Willem "Bill" Strijland, who had experience in Javanese cuisine. At the time, the restaurant was pretty exclusive—with space to host only 25 guests. Yet, 4 years later, it was named the best restaurant in the Caribbean by the Caribbean Tourist Association.

The restaurant was probably most iconic for its Javanese-inspired exterior with its pointy, slanted roofs. However, the first version of Bali did not look like that at all but was still considered as one of the most popular restaurants on the island



at the time. The restaurant saw three different owners during its existence, during which it underwent various renovations and rebranding.

In 1964, the restaurant was taken over by Karel "Carl" Schmand. Over the years, the restaurant needed constant renovation and repair, mainly due to its vulnerability to leaks and the unstable pillars underneath the foundation. However, the biggest change made to the restaurant happened

in the year 1970—still under the ownership of Schmand, when it got its iconic pointy roofs. The restaurant was also expanded to host a total of 85 guests. This was "The New Bali", who had its official (re)opening in 1972.

After 1972, when Ronny Schmand took over, the restaurant saw yet another expansion; this time complete with a long bar and dance floor, where guests enjoyed live music from legendary Aruban musician and composer, Toti

Arends.

After 1989, the restaurant was again handed over to other owners, and since then suffered from unstable pillars underneath the foundation, resulting in various leaks and overflowing of water into the restaurant. And as most great things come to an end, so did the survival and maintenance of the Bali Restaurant. However, folks today still reminisce its legacy, and it's now considered a lost monument.

Be apart of the conversation: if you or any family member of yours have a memory of the Bali restaurant, whether it be a picture or just a story, share it with us! We would love to see this legendary hot spot through the lens of our visitors!

Source and pictures credit to: "De Kolibrie op de Rots (en meer over de geschiedenis van Aruba)" by Evert Bongers. □





Papillon: Where Culinary Tradition Sparks with Timeless Elegance



Tucked away in the vibrant heart of the Village for over a decade and a half, Papillon isn't just a restaurant; it's a culinary adventure waiting to unfold. Picture this: a sanctuary where the flavors of the French Caribbean have danced harmoniously with classic French fare for the past 15 years, all set against the backdrop of a movie-inspired ambiance that's as enchanting as it is welcoming.

Located in the heart of Palm Beach and within walking distance from hotels and local markets in the area, Papillon takes the famous story of a French man experiencing the flavors and culture of the Caribbean and incorporates these aspects of the Caribbean touch into their French culinary repertoire. Step through the doors of the newly-expanded Papillon, and you're not just stepping into a dining establishment; you're stepping into a world where sophistication embraces you like an old friend. The decor, a homage to the allure of the iconic film, casts a spell of intimacy and comfort, urging you to settle in and relish every moment. Here, dining isn't just about sustenance; it's about indulging in an

experience meticulously crafted to ignite your senses.

At the heart of Papillon's magic lies its menu – a symphony of flavors orchestrated by culinary artisans. Imagine savoring the decadent richness of foie gras or the sublime delicacy of frog legs, each dish a love letter to tradition infused with a dash of innovation. And oh, the spectacle of the Dover sole being expertly prepared table-side! It's culinary theater at its finest, leaving you spellbound with every bite. All this served with a backdrop of the Caribbean ambience, complete with live musical performances and an inviting and colorful twist to your dinner experience!

But wait, there's more! Enter the realm of the Chef's Table, a weekly extravaganza led by the maestro himself, Executive Chef Juan Ludeña. Prepare to be whisked away on a six-course odyssey, each dish meticulously paired with wines handpicked from the largest French wine selection on the island by the esteemed Maitre d' Michael Otten. It's a soirée reserved for those who truly appreciate the artistry of gastronomy – an exquisite symphony for the palate.

In essence, Papillon isn't just a restaurant; it's an oasis for epicurean explorers. It's where passion meets refinement, where every dish is a masterpiece waiting to be savored, and every moment is a celebration of the finer things in life. So if you're craving the warmth of French Caribbean delights, Papillon invites you to join them on an unforgettable journey for the senses. Bon appétit!



Papillon is located in Palm Beach in front of the Hilton Resort, and open from 5pm to 10pm. Early Bird takes places from 5pm to 7pm. For reservations or more information please contact the restaurant at +297 699 5400, e-mail them at info@papillonaruba.com or visit their website at papillonaruba.com □



Dining in? Try making a local favorite How to make “pan bati”

(Oranjestad)—If you're ever up for an Aruban snack, try making another Aruban classic appetizer called Pan Bati. Similar to a pancake both in appearance and cooking, this is a super easy meal that adults and children will both enjoy. Here's how to make it!

Ingredients:

2 cups of all purpose flour
1 cup grams of fine cornmeal (we recommend the Harina PAN brand)
2 tbsp baking powder
1 1/3 cup of milk
1 pinch of salt
2 tbsp of granulated sugar
Oil for cooking

Instructions:

Add all the dry ingredients in a bowl first, and stir until well mixed. Then add the milk and beat until reached a pancake-like consistency. If more moisture is needed, add some water until reached desired consistency.

In a hot pan with oil, pour in enough batter to cover the bottom of the pan. Just like pancakes, flip the pan bati when one side turns golden brown. When your pan bati is ready, place on a plate and cover with a clean kitchen towel.

Traditionally, pan bati is cut in triangle pieces, and is often eaten as a side dish with soup, fried fish or stews. However, it is also casually enjoyed with some butter and cheese on top! □



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NOORD - It is hard to imagine this happening today, but years ago people dumped all kinds of refuse straight into the ocean, including old cars, and their household garbage, which of course included lots of glass. Over the next 30 years the pounding waves cleaned the beach, by breaking down everything but glass and pottery. The pounding waves washed the trash up and down, back and forth. Tons of polished, broken glass pieces were created by the pounding surf. These smoothened, colored glass particles then settled along the sea shore in millions, and that is why you can find these beautiful and colorful pieces on the north shore beaches of Aruba.

Especially on the strip on white sand between the famous Natural Bridge" and the huge red anchor close to "Grapefield" beach you will be able to find your own pieces of sea glass. The sea glass that was created is the product of a very long and interesting process. It can take anywhere from 10 to 30 years to make sea glass. The name for any piece of glass that finds its way to the ocean and tumbles around

Another Treasure of Aruba's Beaches: Sea Glass!

in the water long enough is "Sea glass.

The colorful pieces of glass are being used for decoration, handcrafts and jewelry! Once glass makes its way into the ocean, the glass is broken up into shards and is tumbled around in the water, where sand and other rocks act like sandpaper to smooth out its rough edges. Sometimes as the sea glass is passed through fire, it becomes fire glass, the rarest of sea glass with certain inclusions, just like precious gems.

For years, the water beat against the different kinds of trash being dumped. Glass, household appliances and even motor parts were discarded on the beach. The waves and weather conditions wore down the overwhelming amount of garbage in the water, creating millions of beautiful smooth rocks.

It's hard to believe the short-sighted mistakes we were making that could have potentially ruined these beautiful beaches. But thanks to natural processes, the ocean transformed the trash into the sea glass.

Each colored gem on the beach has its own story.

The ruby red glass stones are typically from old car tail-lights.

Then, the sapphire rocks are the remnants of broken apothecary bottles. The most common and the easiest to find are the brown (Amstel & Polar beer), green (Heineken & Balashi beer)

and clear glass which are the soft much loved "soft drink" bottles.

If you like to see the sea glass for yourself, and be in awe of the power of nature, rent a car or jeep and go explore our deserted beaches on the north side of the island. Make it a fun family day!

Even if we didn't mean to pollute the Beaches how we did, it is inspiring to see just how the earth can correct our mistakes.

Funny, how trash can change into treasures! Everybody knows that you are not allowed to take local shells home, but the people

working at the airport have no problem you taking sea glass home. A few of those pieces make great souvenirs. You can place them in a wine glass or large bottle for decoration and every time you look at it a smile will light up your face thinking back of your unforgettable Aruba vacation! ☐

Aruba to me

ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from Ron and Maria Itri of Boston Massachusetts USA who are shown arriving in Aruba in October of 1990.

They wrote to us saying: "Photo was taken at Aruba Airport where they were greeted by Native Arubans and presented with flowers as they disembarked from the airliner which was traditional way of greeting vacationers to Aruba during the 1990's.

Ron and Maria first came to Aruba on their honeymoon in October of 1988 and



loved the island so much that they returned to celebrate their wedding anniversary in October of 1989 when they purchased time sharing at the luxurious Amsterdam Manor where construction was nearly completed at the time.

We fell in love with the Island and his people and of course the weather and the beautiful architecture and location of Amsterdam Manor. And we have been returning every year to celebrate our anniversary with the exception of 2 years during the pandemic. We consider Aruba our second home and hope to come back for many more years to come if God Allows."

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! ☐



For a small island, Aruba sure has a lot of unique treasures. Among these, we have some subspecies of animals that are unique to our island. These have evolved to perfectly adapt to our desert climate and make Aruba their home. At the same time, they are part of what makes Aruba truly one of a kind.

Cascabel (rattlesnake, *Crotalus durissus unicolor*)

According to the Arikok National Park, Aruba knows two kinds of snakes, the Santanero and the Cascabel. The cascabel belongs to the rattlesnake family. The cascabel is the only venomous snake from Aruba. It has a length of 65cm to 100cm, and is about 4 to 5cm wide. Its color varies from light brown to grey-brown, and its underbelly is white. On its back there are marks that are a little darker, in the shape of diamonds.

Its reproduction is oviparous, meaning the offspring can hatch from their eggs just before, during or immediately after laying.

The cascabel lives mainly in the Arikok National Park. It likes to live in dark places, and is thus found hidden among the limestone rocks and under stones. As a defense mechanism, the cascabel uses its rattle as a warning, and it is not an aggressive animal.

The cascabel feeds on lizards, small mammals such as rats and mice. It paralyzes or kills its prey with its venom, which is injected through a bite. The enemies of the casca-

bel are donkeys, goats, humans and cars. Humans are the biggest enemy of the cascabel, as they kill them and destroy their habitat for urbanization.

Shoco (burrowing owl, *Athene cucularia arubensis*)

The shoco is a small bird which is seldom seen. They are active during the day but are more active later in the day and at night for hunting. These owls have very good night vision and very good hearing. The shoco is the national symbol of Aruba.

The shoco has about 20cm of length, and the females are slightly heavier than the males. They are light brown in color, with many white spots. The belly of the Shoco is either white or light brown, and the shoco has striking yellow eyes. Its beak is yellow/green. Young owls do not have white spots and are lighter in color. The nest of the shoco is a burrow in the ground. If the shoco cannot find a burrow, it will dig one in soft soil. The shoco lays one or two eggs every other day until all the eggs are laid – a shoco can lay up to four eggs. The first owlets hatch after three to four weeks. The shoco owl takes care of the owlets for three months until they leave the nest. Only a few owlets survive.

The owls dig burrows in the ground with low grass vegetation. An owl can live up to nine years.

Its defense mechanism is simply to fly away or retreat to its burrows. They eat mostly insects, mice and

Unique fauna of Aruba

lizards, and the main threats to their survival are boas – an invasive species introduced by humans as pets – and humans through destruction of their habitat.

Prikichi (parakeet, *Aratinga pertinax*)

The Prikichi is the national bird of Aruba. On Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao, parakeets can be found, but each of the three islands has a different breed. The Yellow-shouldered Amazon parakeet that we have on Aruba is also found along the coast of Venezuela. Unfortunately, there is interbreeding between the breeds due to cage birds from, for example, Curaçao being released on Aruba. The parakeet population on Aruba is in danger due to extensive deforestation occurring on the island because of the growing population.

The prikichi weighs between 90 to 100 grams. It has a greenish-brown head with some yellow around the eye. The back and wings of the parakeet are dark green, and the underside of the body is a lighter shade of green. There is also a bit of blue in the wings. The parakeet's beak is gray/black.

Parakeets often use termite nests as breeding sites. Parakeets are found in all natural environments (mondi) of the island. It defends itself by flying away and loud cries. Parakeets eat seeds from the pods of the Kwihi tree, Divi Divi, and columnar cactus. They also consume natural fruits. Its main predators are boa constrictors, humans.

Conew (cottontail rabbit, *Sylvilagus floridanus nigronuchalis*)

The Eastern Cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) was probably brought over to the island by Indian settlers thousands of years ago as a source of food. This rabbit, locally known as Conew, has spread all over the island and has become part of our ecosystem. The very adaptable Conew can live in

a wide variety of habitats, including Aruba's xeric scrublands, where it typically grazes on weeds and grasses.

The Aruban Conew has a brownish grey color and a distinctive white belly. This white fur extends to the bottom of the tail which becomes visible as the rabbit runs. These rabbits can grow up to approximately 40 centimeters in length over their short lifespan of 3 years. Cottontail rabbits reach reproductive maturity when they are just 2 to 3 months old. A female rabbit, called a doe, finds a suitable nest spot under a shrub or rocks and lines it with fur. She can have an average of 3 to 4 litters per year averaging 5 young each. The doe only visits her young once or twice a day to nurse her babies for a period of 2 to 3 weeks. The young reach independence at 4 to 5 weeks.

The Aruban Conew is an endangered species and protected by Aruban law. The Conew is thought to have drastically declined due to an increase in human activities, habitat fragmentation and predation by the invasive Boa constrictor as well as feral cats and dogs. However, recently there seem to be more rabbit sightings in rural and wilderness areas and also in the National Park. This could be linked to a recent decline of the invasive Boa population after the long period of drought. As the Conew can reproduce very quickly, a short break in predation pressure can lead to a fast increase of rabbits. Sadly, the Boas are back on the rise again with the truly wet rainy seasons we have recently experienced. This could cause a new decline in the Conew population that was just starting to recover.

These are but a few of Aruba's beautiful inhabitant, which we must all contribute to protect. For more information, visit <https://www.arubanationalpark.org/main/flora-fauna/> □



The legend of the Kibrahacha tree

(Oranjestad)—The Kibrahacha is a famous tree known locally for its bright, yellow flowers that blooms for just three days. Scientifically known as *Tabebuia billbergii*, and in English as the Yellow Poui, this tree is native to the Caribbean islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao, and is considered among locals as one of the most spectacular trees on the island. But did you also know that the beautiful yellow flowers have a story behind them?

The Kibrahacha is said to have extremely hard wood—so hard that it can break an axe. In fact, that's what its name means in Papiamentu: "kibra" (break) "hacha" (axe). The flowers bloom around April and May, but this only last for about three days, as the flowers start to fall off and the tree starts growing its green leaves. The Kibrahacha is especially particular, as it's the only one among its neighboring trees to starts blooming first.

The legend of the Kibrahacha
Written by Hubert (Lio Booi)

One day Aterima, who lived west of the hill Sero Warawara, woke up one day to find her father sleeping in his hammock, suffering a bout of terrible fever. Her mother was very worried, and as was the custom in the olden days, asked Aterima to go fetch Kudawechea, who was a epistemophile, to come see his father.

Aterima wasted to time and went to go fetch Kudawechea. Upon telling Kudawechea that her father was sick, he immediately accompanied Aretima back to her hut, where he encountered her father in a bad state. Not willing to waste any time, he told Aretima that the only thing that can cure her father is a home-made potion made out of the Kibrahacha flower. At the time the Kibrahacha was not yet in her blooming season, but the stubborn Kudawechea was determined to bring back Aretima's father back to health, and so off they went to the nearest Kibrahacha tree.

When they arrived at the tree,

they saw that it was covered head to toe in thorns, with only a few closed flowers at the very top. Kudawechea, experienced veteran in all things Aruban flora and fauna, told Aretima to start plucking the thorns of the tree to climb to the top where the flowers are. Aretima, just as determined to save her father, didn't hesitate to start.

To her surprise, every time she plucked a thorn of the tree, a bright, yellow flower bloomed in its place. The thorns were hard to pluck out, but Aretima continued plucking with enthusiasm and wonder at the unfolding sight before her. Not too long after she was able to fill her entire satchel with the yellow flowers. Kudawechea, satisfied to see Aretima so happy and encouraged to help her father, took her back to her hut.

Upon arriving back at the hut, Aretima's mother quickly made a tea out of the flowers and gave it to her sick husband. Miraculously, after just one sip of the tea, the



father's fever left his body immediately, and he opened eyes and sprung up feeling new.

The next morning, they all visited the same Kibrahacha tree that saved the life of Aretima's father and they saw another miracle. The tree was covered again in the same bright, yellow flowers, with not a thorn in sight. And as the legend goes, from that day on, the Kibrahacha tree no longer produced any more thorns. □

Aruba's neighborhoods; the meaning behind their names

Just like any other country, Aruba has unique and beautifully named neighborhoods that all form a part of its culture and development. Many of these names have a historical background and meaning that teaches us about the island and its rich culture every day.

With this series, we want to take you on a journey of discovery, where you'll learn not only the beautiful names but the history behind it that gives it life and meaning.

Ayo

Ajo, or Ayo, is a word with Arawak-Indian origin. A (or



Ha) is an Indo-Antillean generalizing word. If you were to change a part of the word "Ayo", namely 'Yo', to 'Yu' and make 'Ayu', it would mean "white."

However, as we now know, the name of the neighborhood is 'Ayo'. The word 'Yo' stands for Yocahu, which is another word for 'creator' in Arawak/Taino and in the Papiamentu spoken today, 'Ayo' means 'bye'.

At Ayo, you can find some of the most well known rock formations. These formations became a well loved and visited attraction at Aruba that is held in high regards by both tourists and locals alike.

If you'd like to know more about the rock formations at

Ayo, stay tuned for our article where we tell you all about its location and history.

This neighborhood's abbreviation is; A.

Alto Vista

This word combination can be roughly translated to a 'high point of view' and the neighborhood received this name from the Hill.

In the surrounding areas, Domingo Antonia Silvestre built his by his own means the very first chapel or church of Aru-

ba. The walls of this church were made with rocks but the roof was made of dry corn stalks. The church was inaugurated by father Pablo Algemesi

If you'd like to know more about the Alto Vista Church's beautiful history, stay tuned for our article where we tell you all you need to know about it for when you visit it. □

This neighborhood's abbreviation is; AV.



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 41 Homes for

1 Crow
cries

5 Gives off

10 Tennis
legend
Arthur

11 New York
area east
of SoHo

13 LummoX

14 Game fish

15 Bony fish

17 Hosp.
sections

18 Foes

19 Court
concern

20 USN rank

21 Wizard

22 Get to
one's feet

25 Beer
choice

26 Milk buy

27 Slump

28 Finish

29 Leafy
green

33 Pi follower

34 Voracious
fish

35 Sport fish

37 Work hard

38 Painter's
motion

39 Writer
Ferber

40 Fills
completely

DOWN

1 Secret
supply

2 Narnia

lion

3 Com-
plete

4 River

bottom

material

5 Follows as
a result

6 Castle
surround-
ers

7 Ailing

8 Period
from

cause to
effect

Saturday's answer

9 Attic

use

12 Solution

16 Tie up

21 Tycoons

22 Male

gametes

23 Gls'

helmets,

in slang

24 Neighbor

of Spain

25 Den

bunch

27 Back-

bones

29 Director

Lee

30 Battery

end

31 Good

dishes

32 NFL

pioneer

George

36 Whole

bunch

CORALS CHAP
IBERIA LANE
VANITY ANTE
IMAGE VISOR
LALA RAMONE
TOAD LID
SHOCKER ROO
TIE HERO
ORATES TUSK
ROVER JUNTA
ICET LANDER
ECHO ENDIVE
SOON DEADEN

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
10 11 12
13 14
15 16 17
18 19
20 21
22 23 24 25
26 27
28 29 30 31 32
33 34
35 36 37
38 39
40 41

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

3-25

CRYPTOQUOTE

EYGLJPXLHF LE XWF CDJQ

DTDSFJLJP. XWF HDGUW TLJQE

DGF XWF HIGJLJP BDTJ.

— CFTLE PGLVVDGQ

Saturday's Cryptoquote: OUR LIFE IS MARCH WEATHER, SAVAGE AND SERENE IN ONE HOUR.

— RALPH WALDO EMERSON

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

9 1 3
1 5 9
6 9 7 1 5
1 3
6 1 8
4 3 5 7
8 7 3 1
4 3 8
2 9 4

Difficulty: ★★★

10/17

Answer to previous puzzle

8 9 7 3 1 2 4 6 5
5 2 4 8 6 7 1 3 9
1 3 6 9 5 4 8 2 7
6 1 3 2 7 5 9 4 8
9 5 2 1 4 8 6 7 3
4 7 8 6 9 3 5 1 2
2 4 9 5 3 6 7 8 1
3 6 5 7 8 1 2 9 4
7 8 1 4 2 9 3 5 6

Difficulty: ★★★

10/16

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

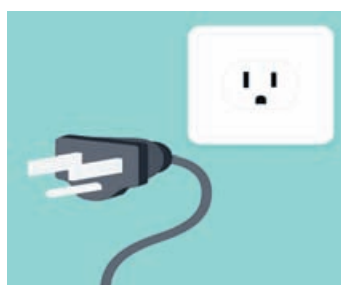
Supermarket hours



Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier, mostly around 2pm.

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

Electrical power



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There

are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the

Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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A pumpjack operates in the foreground while wind turbines at the Buckeye Wind Energy wind farm work in the distance, Monday, Sept. 30, 2024, near Hays, Kan.

Associated Press

The world will be fueled by electricity but even more clean energy is needed, report says

By TAIWO ADEBAYO
Associated Press

The world is set to make abundant energy by the second half of the decade as the production of batteries and solar panels surges but there'll also be an excess of planet-warming fossil fuels, a report released Wednesday by the International Energy Agency said.

"We're now moving at speed into the Age of Electricity," IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol said in a press statement marking the release of the annual World Energy Outlook. Energy worldwide will "increasingly be based on clean sources of electricity," he said.

But the report also notes

that the world is still way off what's needed to cap warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above preindustrial times the limit set in the Paris Agreement because emissions would decline too slowly. It expects demand for oil and gas to peak later this decade and puts the world on pace to hit 2.4 degrees (4.3 Fahrenheit) of warming. □

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218391



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San Nicolas:Tel. 584 4606

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Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
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EMERGENCY

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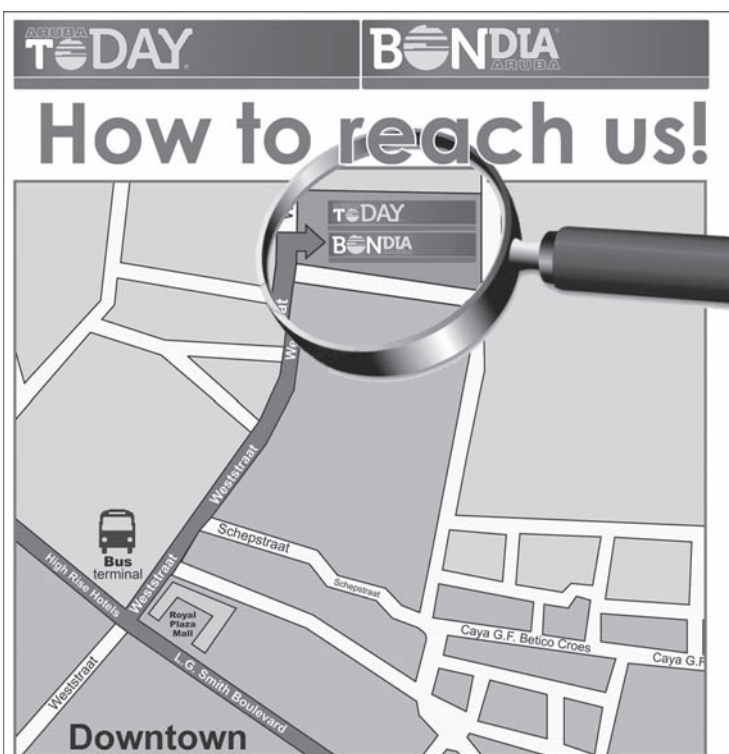
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Eggnog before Thanksgiving? Shoppers eager for a new season scramble retail calendars

By ANNE D'INNOCENZIO

AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — After sipping pumpkin spiced lattes in August and putting up Halloween decorations in late September, Samantha Kowalczyk already looks forward to drinking eggnog-flavored coffee and filling her Wilmington, Delaware, home with cinnamon and sugar cookie scented candles and other holiday aromas. The 30-year-old thinks seasonal flavors and scents should be available year-round. And apparently others feel the same way. In response to growing customer demand, stores of all stripes, from Bath and Body Works and online holiday decor retailer Balsam Hill to Whole Foods Market and doughnut maker Krispy Kreme, are bringing out their festive collections weeks before the Nov. 1 start of the holiday shopping season.

Inflation-weary shoppers may wait until the first cold snap to buy a sweater or gloves, but when it comes to seeking out deals tied to events like the start of a new school year or limited-time seasonal promotions, a fair number of consumers are finding it's never too soon. "I want the season earlier and the things that go with the season earlier," Kowalczyk said. "I want to



An arrangement of holiday themed scented candles is shown at a Bath and Body Works store on Wednesday, Oct. 9, 2024, in New York.

Associated Press

enjoy it for as long as I can ... If I enjoy it, why should I have to wait?"

Clothing, food and home goods stores, only too happy to push the season earlier to get shoppers to spend for a longer period of time, are scrambling the traditional retail calendar in the process. And this year with Thanksgiving Day falling on Nov. 28 and leaving five fewer days before Christmas compared with last year that pressure to get shoppers to buy is even more intense, analysts say. Members of Bath and Body Works' loyalty program could shop a holiday pre-

view collection of candles in scents like winter candy apple and "Bright Christmas Morning" starting Sept. 24. For everyone else, it became available on Sept. 30. Last year, customers in the rewards program didn't get access to those products until Oct. 3, and the holiday-themed merchandise didn't launch in stores until Oct. 9.

Whole Foods brought out autumnal items like pumpkin spice pancake and waffle mix, apple pear ginger Italian soda and pumpkin spice ground coffee in the first two weeks of September; a year ago, it

was the last two weeks of the month. Starbucks introduced its fall menu Aug. 22 including an iced apple crisp nondairy cream chai two days earlier than last year.

Halloween-themed donuts from Krispy Kreme used to be offered a few days before the event, but now it's kicking them off the entire month. Same goes for holidays like St. Patrick's Day. Krispy Kreme now offers holiday themed sweets the week before the holiday, instead of just on that day, according to Dave Skena, Krispy Kreme's global chief brand officer,

Walmart, the nation's largest retailer, plans to advertise savings on Thanksgiving meal products starting Oct. 14, about two weeks earlier than last year. Stew Leonard's, a grocery chain that operates stores in Connecticut, New York and New Jersey, expects to stock chocolate turkeys during all of November instead of only during Thanksgiving week. It also plans to start promoting eggnog, which it previously offered in December, in early November.

"I think people get the itch when they see the next thing," Jake Tavello, the supermarket company's vice president and the grandson of the chain's late founder Stew Leonard Sr. "They get excited even before the weather changes."

Retailers are expanding seasonal flavors and scents to more areas of the store too, especially the now ubiquitous pumpkin spice. Trash bag brand Hefty, owned by Reynolds Consumer Products, introduced cinnamon pumpkin spice scented bags on Sept. 27, 2022 as a marketing gimmick online, but it sold out in seconds, and each year it's been offered earlier to keep up with consumer demand, said Brian Lutz, marketing director of Hefty Waste. □

Small business disaster loan program is out of money until Congress approves new funds



Businesses are seen in a debris field in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024, in Chimney Rock Village, N.C.

Associated Press

By MAE ANDERSON

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Small Business Administration has run out of money for its disaster assistance loans, delaying much needed relief for people applying for aid in the wake of the destruction caused by Hurricanes Helene and Milton.

The SBA offers Economic Injury Disaster Loans to businesses and people affected by disasters. The organization said earlier said it expected to run out of funding by the end of

the month. Congress can approve more funds, but doesn't reconvene until Nov. 12.

The SBA is pausing new loan offers until it gets more funding, which means loans that have not already been offered will be delayed by at least a month. SBA Administrator Isabel Casillas Guzman said people should keep applying for the loans, however. The SBA's loan application portal remains open, the agency's disaster centers and in-person staff remain

deployed across the country, and it will continue to accept new applications and ready borrowers to get their disaster loan offers as soon as possible once Congress appropriates funds. So far, the SBA has seen around 37,000 applications for relief submitted from those impacted by Hurricane Helene and 12,000 applications for those impacted by Hurricane Milton. So far, the SBA has made more than 700 Helene loan offers totaling about \$48 million. □

NBA Commissioner Adam Silver reflects on his op-ed calling for change to sports betting a decade ago

By TIM REYNOLDS

AP Basketball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — "Betting on professional sports is currently illegal in most of the United States outside of Nevada. I believe we need a different approach."

The upcoming 10th anniversary of NBA Commissioner Adam Silver typing those two sentences is significant because those words were part of a movement that changed the sports landscape and brought betting on games a controversial issue for decades mainstream.

And those two sentences were the start of an op-ed piece that carried Silver's byline in The New York Times, first appearing on the newspaper's website on Nov. 13, 2014 and in the print edition the following day. He wrote the piece himself, not even sure when he started where it was going. The headline: "Legalize and Regulate Sports Betting," represented a seismic shift from the NBA's previous position on the matter. Silver was simply trying to start a conversation. A decade later, the NBA has more than two dozen



NBA Commissioner Adam Silver talks to reporters, June 6, 2024, in Boston.

Associated Press

business relationships with gaming companies.

The notion of sports betting isn't part of a conversation anymore. It's a phenomenon.

"I'd say when it comes to sports betting, I certainly don't regret writing that op-ed piece and being in favor of legalized sports betting," Silver said. "I still think you

can't turn the clock back. I think, as I said at the time, with the advent of the internet, widely available sports betting online ... that we had to deal directly with technology and recognize that if we don't legalize sports betting, people are going to find ways to do it illegally."

Silver's op-ed did not

change the betting landscape on its own, but it's clear that it helped get the ball rolling. The ball was not moving very quickly at first; nearly four years after writing the op-ed had passed before the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a federal law that barred gambling on football, basketball, baseball and other sports

in most states and gave states the go-ahead to legalize betting on sports.

That law, the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act, had been in place since 1992 and barred state-authorized sports gambling with some exceptions. It made Nevada the only state where a person could wager on the results of a single game. In the first four years after PASPA was struck down, Americans legally wagered \$125 billion on games.

"I was in favor of a federal framework for sports betting. I still am," Silver said.

"I still think that the hodgepodge of state by state, it makes it more difficult for the league to administer it. I think it creates competition, understandably, among states to get just think New York, New Jersey or a situation like that where you're both competing for the same customer so you can compete on tax rates and other things and a regulatory framework.

"I think that on the downsides of sports betting, they certainly exist, and I think we have to pay a lot of attention to that. □

Capitals' Alex Ovechkin becomes the 60th NHL player to record 700 career assists

By STEPHEN WHYNO

AP Hockey Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Alex

Ovechkin is the 60th player in NHL history to record 700 career assists, reaching the



Washington Capitals left wing Alex Ovechkin, center, attempts a shot against Vegas Golden Knights goaltender Adin Hill, left, and Golden Knights defenseman Brayden McNabb (3) during the first period of an NHL hockey game Tuesday, Oct. 15, 2024, in Washington.

Associated Press

milestone with his second point Tuesday night in the Washington Capitals' 4-2 victory against the Vegas Golden Knights.

Ovechkin had a secondary assist on Tom Wilson's power-play goal early in the second period, then set up linemate Aliaksei Protas a few minutes later.

"He makes that play happen on that goal," coach Spencer Carbery said. "Great job using his feet, cuts back, finds space. That's a huge play in that moment."

A montage of his assists played on arena video boards at the ensuing timeout, and Ovechkin waved to fans who gave him a standing ovation.

"It's because of lots of

shots, lots of rebounds coming from the net, so I'll take it," Ovechkin said.

Second on the career goal-scoring list with 853, Ovechkin has three assists through his first two games of the season.

The 39-year-old winger is 42 goals away from breaking Wayne Gretzky's record that long seemed unapproachable.

Ovechkin is the sixth player with 700 goals and 700 assists, joining Gretzky, Gordie Howe, Jaromir Jagr, Marcel Dionne and Phil Esposito. He credited playing 20 years in the league for his latest accomplishment.

"It's a pretty big number," Ovechkin said. "Nice to be in that company."

Ovechkin would need

1,263 more assists to tie Gretzky, the "Great One," who has more assists than anyone else in hockey has points.

The second game of the season came with the 39-year-old playing some right wing, shifting from the left side that has been his position for the vast majority of his career. He acknowledged it was difficult to adjust at first.

"You adjust, neutral zone, defensive zone, and especially in the offensive zone you're moving around," Ovechkin said. "It doesn't matter for me. First couple shifts were kind of like, 'Whoa.' It's always like I wanted to go to the left side. But we'll see how it goes." □

Kansas City Chiefs owner backs kicker Harrison Butker's new PAC supporting 'traditional values'

By DAVE SKRETTA

AP Sports Writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) —

The owner of the Kansas City Chiefs said Wednesday that he has no issue with kicker Harrison Butker forming a political action committee designed to encourage Christians to vote for what the PAC describes as "traditional values."

Butker announced his UPRIGHT PAC last weekend, during the Chiefs' bye, in a series of postings on social media.

"One of the things I talk to the players every year about at training camp is using their platform to make a difference," Chiefs chairman Clark Hunt said.

"We have players on both sides of the political spec-



Kansas City Chiefs kicker Harrison Butker reacts after missing a 65-yard field goal attempt during the first half of an NFL football game against the Los Angeles Chargers Sunday, Sept. 29, 2024, in Inglewood, Calif.

Associated Press

trum, both sides of whatever controversial issue you want to bring up. I'm not at all concerned when our players use their platform to make a difference."

Butker is front-and-center on the website of the UPRIGHT PAC along with Missouri Republican Sen. Josh Hawley, who earned the kicker's endorsement ahead of the general election against Democrat Lucas Kuncie.

"We're seeing our values under attack every day. In our schools, in the media, and even from our own government. But we have a chance to fight back and reclaim the traditional values that have made this country great," the PAC says on its website.

"We are working to mobilize Christians across this country to make sure we protect these values at the ballot box. Butker first made what he called a "very intentional" foray into politics in May, when he delivered a polarizing commencement address at Benedictine College, a private Catholic liberal arts school in Atchison, Kansas.

The three-time Super Bowl champion said, among other things, that most of the women receiving degrees were probably more excited about getting married and having children, and that some Catholic leaders were "pushing dangerous gender ideologies onto the youth of America."

Butker also assailed Pride month, an important time for the LGBTQ+ community, and President Joe Biden's stance on abortion.

"His views are not those of the NFL as an organization. The NFL is steadfast in our commitment to inclusion, which only makes our league stronger."

"I've just decided, 'You know what? There's things that I believe wholeheartedly that I think will make this world a better place,' and I'm going to preach that," Butker said, when asked about the address during training camp. "If people don't agree, they don't agree, but I'm going to continue to say what I believe to be true and love everyone along the way." □



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